

Hello Glendale Community Member,

Over the past couple days, you may have noticed a group of people with banners, balloons and a loudspeaker set up across the street from 7670 Chadwick Road. The resident at that address is Department of Corrections Secretary Kevin Carr. Because Wisconsin's overcrowded prisons are facing the deadly challenge of COVID 19, Secretary Carr's inaction is simply unacceptable.

The state's lack of response to this emergency has already resulted in COVID 19 cases in multiple facilities. Below are some of the things prisoners across the state have to say about how the COVID 19 pandemic is being handled.

A prisoner at Columbia Correctional Institute says:

Other than putting us on lockdown nothing has changed in regards to cleanliness.

Someone else at CCI wrote us this email:

Here is what they are not doing:

(1) making staff wear face mask

(2) having the nurses come to our cells once a day, to see who may or may not be ill (I have been coughing but when the nurse comes on the tier, to give the diabetics their shots she won't stop)

(3) forcing the nurses to wear mask because most of them leave a hospital and come straight here putting us at extreme risk, simply because they are working 2 Jobs.

I'm not gonna lie fam, I'm scared...

From someone held at Oshkosh CI:

I did see where CCI and Waupun have it. Plus I know UW-Oshkosh has been asked to house covid-19 patients. Well all of those institutions have one thing in common...

Their dirty laundry is sent here. [...] That will mean anywhere from 5-8 inmates that will touch this dirty linen. And potentially infect everybody in the bsi department.

It's not just the prisoners who are concerned about how the DOC has handled the potentiality of an outbreak. Here's a comment we saw on facebook from a staff member:

As the secretary of the department of corrections for Wisconsin, he exerts a lot of power and influence and is therefore responsible for making correct choices. I just started working at a prison in late January and I have been absolutely appalled at the lack of communication and how slowly it comes. [...] Pressure does need to be put on him.

We have three simple demands that Secretary Carr or Governor Evers could make happen today, if they cared at all about the people Carr is responsible for:

- 1) **Release as many people as possible to reduce dangerous overcrowding.**
 - a) Grant compassionate release to all elderly and immunocompromised people from Wisconsin prisons.
 - b) End crimeless revocations and release those held on them.
 - c) Release all parole-eligible people with re-entry plans or on less than 18 month defers.
 - d) Issue a mass clemency or emergency furlows for people doing time on low-level offenses and people nearing release.
- 2) **Give incarcerated people the means to protect themselves.**
 - a) Prioritize testing in prisons and distribute CDC prevention guidelines.
 - b) Distribute soap, tissues, gloves, masks, gauze to filter vents, and disinfectant wipes or sprays.
 - c) Stop stealing money through Act 355 (Wisconsin DOC is empowered to determine the percentage they take when people put money on commissary for prisoners. The new administration continues Governor Walker's practice of taking 50% or more. Secretary Carr **must** reduce this amount so people can buy needs with support of their loved ones.)
 - d) Make phone, email and tablet access free.
 - e) Support re-entry for people being released.
- 3) **Drive staff who dehumanize and endanger people out of the DOC.**
 - a) Fire Warden Susan Novak (the warden at Columbia Correctional Institute who's actions since November have resulted in the deaths of 3 prisoners) and other problem staff.
 - b) Create an environment that supports nurses and care workers.
 - c) Mandate emergency de-escalation and anti-racist training.

These demands are all within the scope of what Secretary Carr is able to accomplish, or can request Governor Evers to do, but rather than moving forward with practices and policies like these, he continues to pass the buck and say that his hands are tied and that with a Republican legislature he is unable to make any changes. This is simply not true.

Please take some time to sign the petition at **change.org/CovidWIDOC** and support us in continuing to put pressure on Kevin Carr until he makes meaningful changes take place within the DOC and takes responsibility for the safety of all 23,000+ people imprisoned in Wisconsin.

Thank you,
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